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Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

Ministère de la Santé et des Soins de longue durée

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ONTARIO GOVERNMENT REDUCING HEALTH CARE WAIT TIMES

New Wait Time Data Shows Double-Digit Drops in the Central East Area

TORONTO – New data shows the Ontario government's Wait Time Strategy is resulting in decreases in wait times for key health services in the Central East Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) area, Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman announced today.

"Trends in the Central East LHIN area are encouraging with significant decreases in wait times for a number of key health services," Smitherman said. "Through the leadership and hard work of thousands of front line health professionals, the Wait Time Strategy is clearly achieving real results for patients by improving access to care, closer to home."

As a result of the government's Wait Time Strategy, wait times in which nine out of 10 patients have completed their surgery or have had their exam in the Central East LHIN area have decreased significantly since August/September 2005 by:

- 39.0 per cent for cataract surgery (126 days)
- 38.9 per cent for cancer surgery (35 days)
- 37.2 per cent for angiography (eight days)
- 24.3 per cent for hip replacement (97 days).

Wait times for other key health services have also declined by:

- 7.5 per cent for knee replacement (23 days)
- 6.6 per cent for CT scans (four days).

Since the launch of the Wait Time Strategy, the Ontario government has invested $49,301,592 for additional procedures in hospitals in the Central East LHIN area, including:

- 10,499 cataract surgeries ($7,628,650)
- 9,956 cardiac procedures ($9,702,874)
- 3,024 hip and knee joint replacements ($21,125,150)
- 1,496 cancer surgeries ($6,377,018)
- 11,727 hours, 17,591 exams MRI ($3,848,500)
- 2,477 hours, 8,670 exams CT ($619,400).

The new wait time data is available at www.ontariowaittimes.com, which is closing in on nearly 4 million hits as of today.

"Health care providers from across the Central East LHIN are working together to monitor trends and make progress in reducing wait times," said Marilyn Emery, CEO of the Central East LHIN. "These results are a

testament to the hard work of doctors, nurses and other health care professionals who provide timely care to patients and their families."

Today's initiative is part of the McGuinty government's plan for innovation in public health care, building a system that delivers on three priorities – keeping Ontarians healthy, reducing wait time and providing better access to doctors and nurses.

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Media Contacts:

Jeff Rohrer
Minister's Office
416-326-8016

David Jensen
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
416-314-6197

Members of the general public: 1-866-532-3161.

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